

## PATENT

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to a non-final Office action dated November 21, 2003. Claims 1-32 were examined. Claims 11 and 23 have been objected to by the Examiner for typographical errors. Claims 11 and 23 have been amended to correct the typographical errors. Claims 13 and 21 have also been amended to correct typographical errors (correcting delgates to delegatee). Claim 3 has been amended to correct a grammatical error. None of the claims have been amended to overcome any prior art of record. The Examiner has indicated allowable subject matter in claim 28 and allowed claims 9 – 26, and 29 – 31. Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter. New dependent claims 33 and 34 have been added.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §101

The Examiner has rejected claim 27 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter, but has indicated allowability of claim 28, which is dependent on claim 27. Applicant has amended claim 27 to include the transaction processing environment of claim 28. Accordingly, claim 28 has been amended.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph


The Examiner has rejected claims 1 – 8 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. The Examiner states that the meaning of “a value of a lock” as in claim 1 and “plural locks having identical lock values” as in claim 32 is not clear. A “lock value is an encoding of the information held by a lock” as indicated at paragraph 1020 of Applicant’s specification. Applicant respectfully submits that these terms are clear and that claims 1 – 8 and 32 particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1 – 8, and 32.

Applicant appreciates the Examiner’s reasons for allowance. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are allowable because the art of record fails to teach, alone or in combination, the invention described in at least each of the independent claims.

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Conclusion

In summary, claims 1-32 are in the case. All claims are believed to be allowable over the art of record, and a Notice of Allowance to that effect is respectfully solicited. Nonetheless, if any issues remain that could be more efficiently handled by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the number listed below.

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 Steven R. Gilliam	<u>2/23/2004</u> Date

Respectfully submitted,



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